

Weak Verbs: Geminate Verbs (Ross 39)

Dr. Phillip Marshall

1.1 Hebrew has a number of verbs whose R-2 and R-3 are identical. They are called *Geminate* verbs. What does Gemini mean? (Think: constellations.) How were the space missions Mercury, Gemini, and Apollo different from one another?



Basic problem: While these verbs have 3 consonantal roots, as does the normal strong verb, there is a tendency to collapse R-2 and R-3 to form a monosyllable for the verbal core (instead of two syllables). The twin consonants are written only once, but whenever verbal inflections are added a DF will drop in to remind us that the single consonant really represents twin consonants—R-2 and R-3. NOTE: Whenever Geminates monosyllabize, they behave similarly to Hollow verbs, who naturally have a monosyllabic core due to just the two roots. And, like Hollows, inflectional prefixes will usually be OPEN and have a LONG vowel, but they will reduce to VS in O/PPT position. We'll see this below.

1.2 Behavior of Geminates:

1.2.1 Tendency toward forming a monosyllable in the verbal core.

Root	סבב	סבב	סבב	סבב	קלל	תמם
Qal Pft	סַבַּב	סַב	סַבְּבוּ	סַבּוּ	קַלַּל	תַּמַּם
Gloss	he went around	he went around	they went around	they went around	he was light	he was complete

1.2.2 When Geminates monosyllabize, R-2 and R-3 are written once and considered “doubled” or “strengthened” with DF. NOTE:

Uninflected (zero-ending) forms cannot put DF in a final consonant! So,

סַב (implied DF in ב), but סַבּוּ (DF settles down in ב with inflectional ending)

1.2.3 When Geminates add verbal inflections that are *consonantal endings*, they use helping vowels after the doubled root consonant. This applies to all stems except the ones that normally double R-2 as part of the stem morphology (Piel, Pual, Hithpa).

1.2.3.1 The perfect/suffix conjugation: וְ helping vowel before cons. ending.

Root	סבב	סבב	סבב	קלל	קלל
Pft 2ms	סָבַבְתָּ	נִסְבַּבְתָּ	הִסְבַּבְתָּ	קָלַבְתָּ	הִקְלַבְתָּ
Gloss	Q. you went around	Ni. you doubled back	Hi. you brought around	Q. you were light	Hi. you despised

1.2.3.2 The imperfect/prefix conjugation (and those conjugations built off of it): יְ helping vowel before cons. ending.

	סבב	סבב	סבב	סבב	סבב	סבב
	יָסֵב	תִּסְבֹּב	תִּסְבְּינָה	סִבְינָה	תִּסְבְּינָה	תִּסְבְּינָה
	Q. Impf 3ms	Q. Impf 2mp	Q. Impf 2fp	Q. Impv 2fp	Ni. Impf 2fp	Hi. Impf 2fp
	he will go around	you will go around	y'all will go around	Go around!	y'all will double back	y'all will bring around

1.3 Representative forms

		Qal Active	Qal Stative	Niphal	Piel	Hiphil	Hophal
		סבב	קלל	סבב	הלל	סבב	סבב
Pft	3ms	{ סָבַבְתָּ סָבַבְתָּ	קָלַבְתָּ	נִסְבַּבְתָּ	הִקְלַבְתָּ	הִסְבַּבְתָּ	הוּסַבְתָּ
	3fs	{ סָבַבְתְּ סָבַבְתְּ	קָלַבְתְּ	נִסְבַּבְתְּ	הִקְלַבְתְּ	הִסְבַּבְתְּ	הוּסַבְתְּ
	2ms	סָבַבְתָּ	קָלַבְתָּ	נִסְבַּבְתָּ	הִקְלַבְתָּ	הִסְבַּבְתָּ	הוּסַבְתָּ
	3cp	{ סָבַבְתֶּם סָבַבְתֶּם	קָלַבְתֶּם	נִסְבַּבְתֶּם	הִקְלַבְתֶּם	הִסְבַּבְתֶּם	הוּסַבְתֶּם

Impf	3ms	{ יִסַּב יִסַּב	יִקַּל	יִסַּב	יִהַלֵּל	יִסַּב	יִוַּסַּב
	3mp	{ יִסַּבוּ יִסַּבוּ	יִקַּלוּ	יִסַּבוּ	יִהַלְלוּ	יִסַּבוּ	יִוַּסַּבוּ
	3/2fp	{ תִּסַּבְינָה תִּסַּבְנָה	תִּקַּלְינָה	תִּסַּבְינָה	תִּהַלְלֵנָה	תִּסַּבְינָה	תִּוַּסַּבְינָה
WCI	3ms	וַיִּסַּב				וַיִּסַּב	
Impv	2ms	סַּב	קַל	הַסַּב	הַלֵּל	הַסַּב	
	2mp	סַּבוּ	קַלוּ	הַסַּבוּ	הַלְלוּ	הַסַּבוּ	
	2fp	סַּבְינָה	קַלְנָה	הַסַּבְינָה	הַלְלֵנָה	הַסַּבְינָה	
Ptc	ms	סַּבֵּב	קַל	נֹסַּב	מְהַלֵּל	מִסַּב	מוֹסַּב
	fs	סַּבְּבָה	קַלָּה	נֹסַּבָּה	מְהַלְלָה	מִסַּבָּה	מוֹסַּבָּה
Infc w/	sfx	{ סַּב סַּבִּי	קַל	הַסַּב	הַלֵּל	הַסַּב	הוֹסַּב
Infra		סַּבּוּב	קַלּוּל	הַסּוּב	הַלּוּל	הַסַּב	הוֹסַּב

1.4 Gutteral Irregularities: The Qal of אָרַר ‘to curse’ and the Hiphil of רָעַע ‘to do evil’.

The problem here is that when Geminates monosyllabicize, the R-2/R-3 letter will double. However, we know that the Gutts gang will not allow a DF. Also, we learned in Ross 33 that when verbs end with a Gutt, the stems that have a tsere theme vowel will switch to pathach when there is no inflectional ending. Here are a few examples of these problems.

		סַּבֵּב	אָרַר	סַּבֵּב	רָעַע
		Qal	Qal	Hiph	Hiph
Pft	3ms	סַּבֵּב	אָרַר	הִסַּב	הִרָעַע
	3fs	סַּבְּבָה	אָרַרָה	הִסַּבָּה	הִרָעַעָה
	2ms	סַּבּוּת	אָרוּת	הִסַּבּוּת	הִרָעוּת

Impf	3ms	יִסַּב	יֵאָר	יִסַּב	{ יִרַע יִרַע
	3mp	יִסַּבוּ	יֵאָרוּ	יִסַּבוּ	יִרְעוּ
	3/2fp			תִּסְבְּינָה	תִּרְעֵינָה
Impv	2ms			הִסַּב	הִרַע
	2mp			הִסַּבוּ	הִרְעוּ